

**MINUTES OF THE
PUBLIC UTILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY INTERIM COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, July 15, 2015 – 8:30 a.m. – Room 450 State Capitol

Members Present:

Sen. David P. Hinkins, Senate Chair
Rep. Ken Ivory, House Chair
Sen. Gene Davis
Sen. Peter C. Knudson
Rep. Scott H. Chew
Rep. Kay J. Christofferson
Rep. Brad L. Dee
Rep. Rebecca P. Edwards
Rep. Keith Grover
Rep. Stephen G. Handy
Rep. Mike K. McKell

Rep. Justin J. Miller
Rep. Angela Romero
Rep. Keven J. Stratton

Members Absent:

Sen. Kevin T. Van Tassell
Rep. Scott D. Sandall

Staff Present:

Mr. Richard C. North, Policy Analyst
Mr. Samuel C. Johnston, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Tracey Fredman, Legislative Assistant

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.leg.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Hinkins called the meeting to order at 8:39 a.m. Rep. Sandall was excused from the meeting.

MOTION: Rep. Stratton moved to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2015, meeting. The motion passed unanimously with Sen. Davis and Rep. Ivory absent for the vote.

2. Interstate Transmission Line Update

Dr. Laura Nelson, Director, Governor's Office of Energy Development, distributed and presented "Report on Infrastructure." Dr. Nelson reviewed proposed transmission projects and the progress of current projects under construction throughout the state. She also discussed 2015 General Session S.B. 216, "High Cost Infrastructure Tax Credits" and 2015 General Session H.B. 323, "Resource Management Planning by Local Governments" and the impacts the legislation will have on the prioritization of interstate transmission line infrastructure in Utah.

Mr. Rob Simmons, Energy Policy and Law Manager, Governor's Office of Energy Development, discussed the efforts being made by Utah and other states to work with federal agencies in the promulgation of new regulations. He spoke particularly on the issue of exchanging state lands with the federal government so that land under state control may be permitted faster for development.

3. Data Crush: How the Information Tidal Wave is Driving New Business Opportunities

Mr. Christopher Surdak, President, Surdak & Company, presented "Surviving the Data Crush." Mr. Surdak briefed the committee on the current uses of electronic data collected by Internet service companies. He offered suggestions of how a framework for privacy might be accomplished through a requirement of disclosure to consumers about the types of information collected and notification when personal information is used.

Mr. Drew Mingl, State Open Data Coordinator, Department of Technology Services, distributed and presented "Leveraging Open Data to Engage Citizens and Drive Innovation." Mr. Mingl briefed committee members on the processes the state uses to manage open data, and he showed how accessible the data is to the public and other state agencies on the website: OpenData.Utah.gov. He said the website

offers many different types of information searchable by category, including social services, energy and environment, health, transportation, government and taxes, and education.

4. Universal Service Fund: Federal and State Programs Reports

Mr. Chris Otto, Performance Auditor Supervisor, Office of the Utah State Auditor, presented "A Limited Review of the Utah Universal Service Fund." Mr. Otto discussed the funding of the Utah Universal Service Fund and the impact that a decline in federal support would have on the fund and rural telecom service, and provided recommendations that the Public Service Commission:

- adopt rules that encourage efficient use of the Utah Universal Service Fund, and
- track and report regularly to the Public Utilities and Technology Interim Committee the impact of changes in federal support of Utah's rural telecom.

Mr. Thad LaVar, Chair, Public Service Commission, noted that telecommunication service is very different in rural areas than it is in urban areas. He reviewed the history of the Utah Universal Service Fund and highlighted issues that the committee may want to consider, including whether a cap on fees would be appropriate.

Ms. Kira Slawson, Legal Counsel, and Mr. Douglas Meredith, consultant, Utah Rural Telecom Association, distributed and presented "URTA – State Universal Service Results and Future Prospects." Mr. Meredith reviewed the Utah Universal Service program, reported on the federal universal service reforms, and stated that loss of high cost support of the program would jeopardize the operations of Utah Rural Telecommunications Association members and would negatively impact end user services.

Ms. Tara Thue, Director, External Affairs, AT&T, presented "AT&T Testimony" and stated that AT&T does not think that any substantive changes are needed for the Utah Universal Service Fund at this time.

Mr. Eric Isom, Assistant Vice President, Policy Affairs, and Mr. Jim Farr, Director, State Regulatory Affairs, CenturyLink, distributed "Telecommunication Issues Requiring 2016 Legislative Changes." Mr. Farr discussed the need for the continuation of adequate funding of telecommunications and ways to accomplish that goal.

5. Other Items / Adjourn

MOTION: Rep. Ivory moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Hinkins adjourned the meeting at 11:26 a.m.